



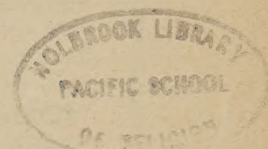
The South India CHURCHMAN

The Magazine of the Church of South India

● DECEMBER 1970

CONTENTS

	Page
The Christ Child	1
The Church, the World Day of the Disabled and Practical Work for the Handicapped	2
Rehabilitation of the Physically Handicapped	3
New look to C.S.I. Hospital, Kancheepuram	4
On Rehabilitating the Physically Handicapped	5
Christians and the Mentally Retarded	6
The Ministry to the Deaf	7
Is there any Hope for the Blind?	8
Christianity and the Handicapped	9
The Congregation and the Handicapped	10
Christian Conference on Development	11
News from the Community Service Centre, Madras	13
The Late Mr. S. Kanagaraj Elias	13
'A Mass Movement in the Mass Movement Area'—An Official Rejoinder	14
Announcements	15
News from the Dioceses	16
Trends	17
Book Notes	18



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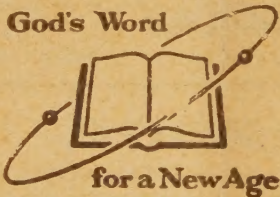
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The Christ Child

Christmas!

The song of the angels at the Nativity.

Songs about the song of the angels. 'Hark the herald angels sing'; 'How sweet was the song that the angels did sing'.

The song of the angels—that has gone wrong.

Songs about the song of the angels that still goes wrong:

Above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hov'ring wing,

And ever o'er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.

The pathos of it all! Bright ineffectual angels beating their wings in the void, messengers of a peace that never comes and a good-will that becomes increasingly precious by its absence.

Yet with the woes of sin and strife
The world has suffered long;
Beneath the angel-strain have rolled
Two thousand and years of wrong:
And man, at war with man, hears not
The love-song which they bring.

The agony of it, too!

And ye, beneath life's crushing load
Whose forms are bending low!

The agony of the men who have gone on suffering without respite, toiling without hope, submerging deeper below the human. The agony also of frustrated hope for the Kingdom round the corner, of feeling helpless to help the helpless, of doubt about the promise and the Presence.

In the face of all this frustration and agony and the cry of 'How long?' what joy can Christmas bring or what perplexity can it take away? Should we not expect God to have intervened since in the affairs of men more powerfully than at the Nativity—especially when the Incarnation had failed quite apparently? Could a child still be God's only answer to the cries of a world torn by strife, poised for self-destruction and sunk in folly and crime? Every new baby becomes only a problem for the whole world today. Then how could the Babe of Bethlehem be any sort of answer to the problems of the world?

It is not only now, however, that men have had to wonder what good a baby could do for the ills of the whole world. Two thousand years ago the Jews had gone through much the same kind of frustration, agony and despair. They had lost their freedom and the certainty that God was looking after them. The more spiritually sensitive amongst them were crying out in horror against the social vices and economic injustices among their people. Their cry, too, went up to God. And His answer was only that a woman would bear a child. As if that was something that didn't happen all too often even every day! And yet, curiously enough, the whole nation began to pin its hope to that answer and to look forward to the coming of that child. The child would be their Messiah, their Deliverer, the Prince of Peace.

And the child came—of obscure parentage, in an obscure village and in rather distressing circumstances. The Gospel stories which speak of a fanfare of angelic welcome and



greetings from some mystery men who came from far away do not tell us that the nation which had been agog waiting for it to happen took any notice—except perhaps for an old person or two who had a special intuition about it. This was because even the most saintly and thoughtful among them had been looking forward to what the child, becoming man, would *do* for them and not to what the birth of the child would itself mean in terms of God's revelation of Himself and of His will for man. Even those who lived close to that child become man and listened to all he had to tell them during his whole 'ministry' failed to grasp this all-important dimension of Incarnation, but went on eagerly hoping that somehow, sometime—even after the Resurrection—he would 'restore the Kingdom to Israel'. And it was only after Pentecost that they began to get an inkling of this dimension and to be struck by the significance of the divine kenosis that had made the Child possible. And when they began to grasp it they were almost swept off their feet to the other extreme of growing ecstatic about the mystery of God having come casually into the world that they—and the Church after them—tended to forget the message and the mission that Jesus had come to challenge them with.

The Incarnation was not meant to put an end to all suffering, strife and sin. It was intended to bring a challenge to man to share in the daring self-giving and trustfulness of God which could lead to a remaking of the world. God so loved the world that He came to identify Himself with man in the only way perfect identification is possible—becoming a 'human' Himself as though, as someone has said, a man should become a dog in order to identify himself with dogs and express his perfect love for them. Again, God so loved the world that he dared embody his plans and purposes in the life of a child that would live or die, be loved or hated, and be honoured or rejected, according to the wills of men. The love and the faithfulness of God have not changed since then and the Christ child continues to be both their embodiment and His answer to human need and human yearning—an answer that is at once a gift and a challenge. But if this answer does not make sense to anyone, our God Himself cannot. For He is only as the incarnation shows Him—Love and Trust, Humility and Patience, and even His Wisdom and Power function only through these. However, countless men and women who have accepted this answer—the gift of the Babe and the challenge of its helplessness—have found fulfilment, strength and a mission to renew, to reconcile and to divinise. The whole world could also do this or be recreated in this way if only it could also accept this answer. And if we in the Church accept it ourselves we have a two-fold task—to help at least a tiny part of the world around us also to accept it, and to act upon it ourselves. A commonly used bidding prayer for Christmastide reminds us that one way of doing so is to 'remember in his name the poor and the

helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed..... because this, of all things, would rejoice his heart'. To help our readers enter into this supreme blessedness of caring for others that Christmas brings we turn their thoughts this Christmastide to those who are physically and mentally handicapped. May the joys of Christmas come to us through caring for them and may the same joys also flow to them through our love and service for them!

The Church of North India

Before this Number reaches our readers the Church of North India will have been inaugurated at All Saints' Cathedral, Nagpur, on 29th November. On behalf of the Church of South India we greet the new Church and pray that God should bless it abundantly with enlightened leadership, a deep spiritual life and an acute sense of mission. The joy of the inauguration would have been unalloyed if the New Church had not lost 6,000,000 or nearly half its

anticipated numbers by the quirk of the Methodist vote which pulled the Methodist Church in Southern Asia out of what people had come to regard as an achieved concord.

Even after the withdrawal of the Methodist Church from the projected Union this amalgamation of Churches is the second biggest and widest Union in the world actually to take place, the first being our own Church. The six Churches now coming into union are the Church of India, Pakistan and Ceylon, the United Church of North India, the Methodist Church under the British and Australian Conference, the Baptist Church in North India, the Disciples of Christ and The Church of the Brethren in India.

We have now to work towards wider Union in both the North and the South and of the North with the South. We have also to be praying that conversations, negotiations, and experiments in sharing and co-operation will lead the Churches all over the world closer and closer to the ideal of the one undivided Church.

The Church, the World Day of the Disabled and Practical Work for the Handicapped

KAMALA V. NIMBKAR,* *Bombay*

So often I am asked as to just what individuals or organisations can do for the handicapped besides give money either to individuals or to institutions and societies working for them. In this paper I shall attempt to make some practical suggestions.

The World Day of the Disabled was established in Europe in order to bring the handicapped together in brotherhood and provide an opportunity for others to understand their needs and problems. The founders of the Day were the members of The International Federation of Disabled Workers and Civilian Handicapped (Federation Internationale Des Mutilés et Invalides du Travail et Invalides Civils—known as F.I.M.I.T.I.C.). The FIMITIC came about through the needs of civilian workers who had been injured in industry, etc., as after the Second World War all attention was diverted to the needs of the ex-soldiers. There was no intention to detract from the needs of the war heroes but those who had kept industrial wheels turning and had been injured wished also to be considered.

The First World Day was observed on the third Sunday in March in 1960. Fifteen countries participated. Today the number is seventy to eighty. Observances consisted of prayers in Churches, meetings, discussions, symposia, radio programmes, entertainment by and for the handicapped and so on. In India, after learning of the World Day when attending a Rehabilitation Conference in Northern Italy, I approached a number of organisations who, then, in 1963, observed the Day with functions, sports for the handicapped and so on. Since I was the Secretary-General of the Indian Society for the Rehabilitation of the Handicapped it seemed natural to place the development of this yearly programme in the hands of that Society.

The observance of the World Day has increased steadily until today more than a hundred cities and towns observe it in various ways. Sports for the handicapped, entertainments by the handicapped children of the institutions, public meetings, awards to outstanding handicapped workers in open industry, citations to employers of the handicapped

and radio programmes have been the chief ways of observing the Day. Since the Indian Society for the Rehabilitation of the Handicapped concerns itself with five categories—deaf, orthopaedic (crippled), leprosy-affected, mentally retarded and blind, it has been our aim to bring the workers and handicapped in all five areas of disability together on this Day or sometimes Week of observances. We believe that this is important as only in unity there is strength and whenever one group alone wishes to receive assistance, the whole cause is weakened. The brotherhood of the handicapped is important. We particularly desired to bring the leprosy workers and their non-infectious patients or ex-patients into the group activities since, now that leprosy is so definitely curable, we must do all that is possible to educate the public to this fact, removing the stigma, and work to find early cases which alone will reduce the incidence of leprosy in our country.

Special mention should be made of the excellent co-operation for observance of the World Day of the Disabled given by the Directorate-General of Employment and Training, Government of India, which each year urges the Employment Exchanges throughout India to join with others or take the lead in observing the Day, not just the nine Special Employment Exchanges for the Physically Handicapped.

How can the Churches share in the observance of the World Day? Of course there can be a Special Service and Prayers for the disabled, but that is not enough. If the disabled wish to enter your church, can they do so? How many steps are there at the entrance? Is there a railing for the elderly and lame? Can you make a temporary or, better still, a permanent ramp? Can you reserve an area for those in wheelchairs?

The Churches can also join in any local observances either as a group or individually—there is always so much to be done. Or, if there is none, they can meet with the local heads of institutions for the various categories of the handicapped and with them organise an observance of the

* Mrs. Nimkar, B.A., O.T.R., is Adviser in Occupational Therapy and Rehabilitation and Editor-in-Chief and Secretary-General of the Indian Society for the Rehabilitation of the Handicapped—Ed.

Day. Hospitals can be visited and suitable articles distributed (i.e. fruit and sweets if the patient is allowed to eat them).

The above has to do with the observance of the World Day of the Disabled, the third Sunday in March of each year. But what about the rest of the year? Surely a study of the entrances and approaches to the church could be made and so altered as to enable people on crutches, the lame in wheelchairs, weak, aged, and the blind to enter easily. For the blind braille markers at proper places and perhaps a reserved pew would be appreciated. It could even be considered to reserve a front seat for the partially hearing and possibly some type of individual amplifier for them and those with only a little residual hearing. There is an international sign language and the sermon can be translated into it and 'shown' as it goes along if there are enough. Once you start exploring

possibilities in this area of removing barriers, architectural and others, you will go far.

Another work can be, once there is easy access to the church, to work for the same in public buildings, post offices, banks, etc. You will think of many more once you start such activities.

May I add that the office of the Indian Society for the Rehabilitation of the Handicapped, the Amerind, 15th Road, Khar, Bombay 52, would like to know of any and all participation in the observances of the World Day of the Disabled so that some mention may be made in the printed report? They would also send you on request with a 20 Paise stamp a copy of a previous report of the World Day Observances.

It is not too early to start planning for your observance of the World Day on March 21st, 1971.

Rehabilitation of the Physically Handicapped

MARY VERGHESE,* Vellore

We have at present no reliable statistics about the number of handicapped in our country and for the time being we have to depend upon rough estimates. According to a rough estimate, there are four to five million blind, a million and a half deaf, four to five million orthopaedically handicapped and nearly 2 million mentally retarded people. The International Society for Rehabilitation of the Handicapped, as a result of a survey to estimate the rehabilitation problem of the world, predicts an addition of 3 million disabled persons a year to the total world disabled. In our own country also, even with the advances made in the management of acute illness, the rapidly expanding industrialisation programmes and the increasing use of motor transport, the number of chronically disabled is significantly increasing. In the past the attitude of governmental and private agencies in the developing countries had been to consider rehabilitation as too expensive a programme and to give priority to the prevention and care of acute illnesses.

Saving of human life can no more be the only cherished goal of medicine. There are far worse things than death. It is much more human to add life to years than to add years to life. The economic value of rehabilitation is also to be understood clearly. Though rehabilitation is primarily humanitarian and early pioneers were motivated by a sense of compassion, experience has proved that it is good economics. Disability results in costly dependence on the family, constituting a serious drain on the economy as a whole. Feelings of dependency and insecurity result in a lowering of the morale of the community as a whole. Children with chronic disabilities, can never grow up to be

productive members of society unless special facilities are provided.

Another misconception which is prevalent is that, when there are several able-bodied people without employment, it is not necessary to find employment for the disabled. This is due to a false belief that disabled people are inferior citizens, inferior to able-bodied in their work capabilities. Experience has proved that, placed in proper positions and given opportunities, the disabled often turn out to be better workers than their able-bodied colleagues. Milton, Roosevelt and Louis Pasteur, to name a few, are examples of disabled people who have given significant contribution in different spheres such as literature, politics and science. Some of the most beautiful paintings are done by people whose arms are either absent or paralysed, with pens held in mouth or between toes.

Even though the Government of India has started certain projects in the fourth plan, the programmes are very inadequate in terms of their quality and the numbers reached. Voluntary organisations, especially the Church, should rise up and take active interest in this great community problem. The Church has shown great leadership in the care and rehabilitation of patients afflicted with leprosy. Rehabilitation of the physically handicapped is a field open to the Church now to demonstrate Christian love and concern. We believe that God has a purpose for every individual. Let us then help the physically disabled to make use of their abilities. Rehabilitation means restoring the handicapped to the greatest physical, mental, social, economic and vocational usefulness of which they are capable. This includes medical rehabilitation, education, training and vocational placement.

* Dr. Mary Verghese is Associate Professor and Head of the Department of Rehabilitation at Christian Medical College and Hospital, Vellore.—Ed.

WANTED

A committed Christian lady—age between 30-50—Spinster or Widow—Without family encumbrances—Telugu Knowing—to become a Warden for a Christian Hostel for High School Girls. Apply before 15th December to the Manager, C.S.I. High School, Dornakal, S.C.R., Warangal Dist.

New look to C.S.I. Hospital, Kancheepuram

J. F. DIAS*

This is a brief history of the C.S.I. Hospital Rehabilitation Centre.

One Missionary Nurse doing public health work in Chingleput area came across a number of Polio cases badly neglected in the Villages owing to poverty and ignorance. She approached Dr. Newbigin, Bishop in Madras, and after many consultations this scheme was evolved and Kancheepuram C.S.I. Hospital was selected for this purpose.

This Hospital stands in the heart of one of the most famous temple cities of India. Since 1907 when Sir Alexander Simpson, then Collector of that area, opened the Hospital, it has served the medical needs of many not only in Kancheepuram but also in the surrounding Villages. For the past three years the local Government Hospital has improved its facilities and bed strength until, now, it is the District Headquarters Hospital. Here free treatment is given and since it is opposite to the C.S.I. Hospital it seemed unnecessary to continue the work on the old pattern and we had an ideal situation to start this new work.

The big question was finance for this scheme. To rehabilitate a child, keep him under supervision, renew calipers as the legs grow, provide physiotherapy treatment, schooling, food and all the care required is a costly task. Through God's guidance we came to know of the Kinderrothlife Foster-ship scheme in Germany and they have found Foster-parents to support each of the children, taking care of them throughout the school period. After that we must think of planning work centres or training them for special type of work. At present there are seventeen children, four of whom have come from Andhra and one from Kerala. Now we require a hostel where the children who are walking with calipers and attending school can live as in a boarding home but always under the supervision of the hospital and the staff, to ensure that they have daily exercises and renewal of calipers at the right time. The first phase—a hostel for twenty children, swimming pool, classrooms for spastics and nursery school—will soon be under construction. This has been made possible by gifts from K.N.H. Presbyterian Church of Australia and other help from various friends. The Methodist Missionary Society has donated a gift to build a fully equipped physiotherapy unit, which will also provide out-patient care to those in and around Kancheepuram. We hope to have a Day Centre where local children who need this kind of treatment can be brought for the day for exercises and schooling.

At present when the children first come they are admitted to the Government Hospital at Chingleput for corrections of their deformities, then taken to C.M.C.

Hospital, Vellore, to be fitted for calipers and then to Kancheepuram to continue the treatment. So far the C.M.C. Hospital has helped us with the Calipers but we urgently need to build up a 'Caliper Fund' so that there will always be money to buy new calipers for the children. Later on we may be able to open our own Workshop and make the appliances required for all who come.

The Medical Superintendent is at present taking a special course in Orthopaedics in Madras so that in future all initial operations and corrections can be done in Kancheepuram.

A short history of some of the children will not be out of place here.

Gnanamonie and Kanniamma, the two tiny girls were the first to come. Kanniamma's parents are suffering from leprosy and are very poor. This is their only child, two having died. Gnanamonie is one of a large Christian family who are coolie workers in a village and could never afford to provide calipers, regular bus trips to hospital, etc., and so the child was left to sit at home. Now both these children walk slowly to the Nursery School each day.

Malaimoni, 11 years old, is from Madras. He was found begging in the streets in Mount Road near the Stores. He was a source of income to the family who have many children. His father works as a peon in the Airways. Malaimoni was anxious to walk like other children and his parents agreed for him to start treatment. He was admitted to Chingleput Hospital where he was in plaster for about three months and later transferred here. Now he is walking with the aid of Calipers and going to school.

Annal, also 11 years old, is a girl from Nagari colony. Her parents are coolies and are very poor. She has a baby brother and she looked after the baby while the parents went to work. For some years they had tried to get treatment for her but could not afford the money asked for. She also was admitted to Chingleput Hospital where she underwent four operations to straighten her limbs and was in plaster for many months. Later she came here for physiotherapy treatment and is now walking with calipers and crutches and is going to school. Both Annal and Malaimoni are in the infant class as they have not been to school before.

For the wonderful opportunities given to these children and to, we hope, many more in the future, our thanks are first due to God who has guided us each step of the way and to our kind friends here and in other lands who show their love and concern.

* Dr. (Mrs.) Dias is Acting Medical Superintendent of the C.S.I. Hospital at Kancheepuram.—Ed.

WANTED

A Protestant Christian with administrative and college-teaching experience as well as good academic qualifications to be Principal of Voorhees College, Vellore, from June 1971. Scale of salary Rs. 700—40—1,100. Apply to Bishop in Madras, Post Box 702, Madras-6, giving all particulars including age.

On Rehabilitating the Physically Handicapped

GEORGE SCOTT,* *Aramboly, Kanyakumari*

After a patient leaves hospital we may look at Rehabilitation from three aspects: (a) Work (b) Home (c) Transport from home to work.

In the developed countries most people are at work regularly. Thus after an accident or stroke the patient may or may not be able to return to work. Part of the work of the Rehabilitation Officer is to find out from the Surgeon what is the prognosis for the patient. He then visits the patient's employer to see if he is willing to keep the job open for the patient, and to see if the patient will be able to do the job again. If the patient cannot do the job, can he use the experience and knowledge in another job within the same field? e.g. if a type fitter loses an arm he may very usefully be employed in the same set-up as a proof reader. If it is impossible to continue in the same line of business then the patient will be sent to a Vocational Training Centre.

At home the patient may need to be rehabilitated. Alterations are needed in the home to accommodate such things as wheel chairs. Maybe the patient has to move from a two storey building to a bungalow, or from the upstairs flat to a ground floor flat. Perhaps a ramp is necessary to replace steps.

Thus if a patient has a job and is comfortable at home—he needs only a means of conveyance to and from work to be able to live an almost normal life. These are readily available in the west, in the shape of small cars with all controls operated by the hands or whatever movement the patient has.

In India we are just beginning to face the problems of Rehabilitation. We cannot just copy the west, for conditions are so different. Not everybody is employed—then why should one hire a handicapped person when there are so many normal (whatever that word might mean!) people available? This seems to be the attitude of many employers. They don't believe that handicapped people can produce good quality work—but why a person who is crippled below the waist should not be able to use his hands and head efficiently is a mystery to me. The person who has overcome his handicap sufficiently to seek for a job is a person of real character and will work far better than the average 'normal' person. There is still the stigma of leprosy. Thus the ex-leprosy patient has a very difficult time to find employment—yet most of us would claim to be scientific in our approach to life, but let our old traditions and superstitions override our reason when we hear that leprosy is an ordinary, not very infectious disease.

The physically handicapped is also socially handicapped—thus he hasn't the money to pay to secure the appointment that his competitors have.

These problems—unknown in the west—make industrial rehabilitation very difficult—and it is up to the church, always a pioneer, to once again lead the way in employing, accepting, loving—whichever way you wish to describe it—the physically handicapped.

Once again—in the realm of the home—the conditions are different to the west. Perhaps we don't have so many flats and their problems, but we have such problems of no decent road surfaces, very small rooms, few built-in bath rooms and latrines, so that wheelchairs are not a very suitable mode of conveyance.

Dr. Mary Varghese and her team at Vellore are investigating this problem.

Needless to say the problem of transport to and from work arises very infrequently. Yet occasionally the demand arises. We have built a motorised 3 wheeled scooter on which Mr. Egbert rides to and from Nagercoil, and are building another.

Although the environment may not present the same problem, yet the personal problems are similar to the West. If we can overcome these, then the patient will probably overcome the environmental difficulties himself. It is in this context that Vocational Training Centres become the crying need of the times. If a disabled patient can spend 18 to 24 months in a residential Vocational Training Centre learning a craft or trade, which would enable him to either resume his old pattern of life confidently or seek sheltered or open employment according to the magnitude of his handicap (nay, the functional level of his ability) a significant headway would have been made in his rehabilitation.

It was this need which made Dr. Harry W. Williams, the then Chief Medical Officer of the Salvation Army Catherine Booth Hospital, Nagercoil, start a Vocational Training Centre for ex-leprosy and other handicapped young men at Aramboly (8 miles from Nagercoil) two years back. As Dr. Williams said during the Inauguration: 'Not least of heaven-sent encouragement we have received has been the willingness of one of our old patients, Mr. Sundar Egbert, to join us as Works Manager, and that Salvation Army International Headquarters could appoint Lt. George Scott, B.Sc. (Eng.), DIP., EDN., A.M.I.E.E., as Rehabilitation Officer with over-all responsibility for the scheme.'

The Centre has 24 trainees who are learning handloom weaving, tailoring, clock-repairing, turning, welding, and spray painting, besides chicken-farming. We hope to send out our first batch of successful trainees during 1971. That the Centre has been able to meet all its running expenditure from its own earnings is striking proof that the handicapped can turn out quality work and service competitively. Our future plans include a sheltered workshop and/or industrial co-operatives.

While the church has done much for the education of the blind and the deaf, it has by and large ignored the needs of the ex-leprosy and the orthopaedically handicapped. Like Christians keeping God for the Sunday, the Church should scarcely be content with remembering their less fortunate brethren once a year and feel they have contributed their share for rehabilitating them. The church must come forward and establish Vocational Training Centres and sheltered workshops to absorb the people trained in Vocational Training Centres. Exactly what these Vocational Training Centres will cater to will depend upon the locality and the needs of the locality.

All unused or scarcely used buildings and all waste lands of the church should be made available for rehabilitation work. Funds must be created and help sought from government and other agencies to carry on the work. The church must create, through all its publicity media, a greater awareness of the needs of the handicapped and their potentialities.

Leaders of the Church and leading Christians—businessmen, industrialists, architects, engineers—must all come forward and employ handicapped people as cooks, gardeners, peons, clerks, stenographers, skilled artisans, etc. For every need, there will be a handicapped person who

* Lt. G. R. Scott is Rehabilitation Officer of the Catherine Booth (Salvation Army) Hospital Vocational Training Centre for the physically handicapped at Aramboly in Kanyakumari Dt.—*Ed.*

can fill it more competently and more efficiently than a 'normal' person. The affluent Christians should blaze the trail by finding and making use of them.

The Tamilnad Evangelical Lutheran Council, which started an Industrial School to train boys along Industrial Training Institute lines, have found the venture redundant and are converting it to train the handicapped. While this has to be appreciated, we would advocate that the handicapped be trained side by side with the 'normal' boys in the existing training institutions run by the Church. Recently, one of us saw two deaf boys being trained in fitting trade along with others. 'They are the best,' said the Instructor, 'their concentration is remarkable.' We fervently hope this is but the first step and that the lifting of the 'mental block' for the deaf would soon extend to other categories of the handicapped, and that the day will soon come when the church and Christians will look upon

the ability of the man as the sole criterion for training and employment.

Before concluding, we wish to sound a note of warning that any attempts at rehabilitation out of a sense of pity or misguided benevolence is bound to end in frustration. We strongly feel that the government regulation which allows two handicapped persons to be employed in the place of one normal person is discriminatory, misdirected and conducive only to sapping the initiative and enterprise of the handicapped. Let not the Church and the leaders make such mistakes.

In the end, we consider our work incomplete if we ignore the spiritual aspect of rehabilitation. 'Our hearts are restless until they find their rest in Thee,' wrote St. Augustine. Thus we would seek to restore to the likeness of Him who made us those whom we seek to rehabilitate, and as there are six other days for every Sunday, much more of this transformation will occur during those days than on Sundays.

Christians and the Mentally Retarded

MARY THANGARAJ,* *Madurai*

The mentally handicapped seem to be nobody's concern. Every year thousands of mentally handicapped children are born in India and struggle through life, mostly uncared for, unwanted in schools and society, shunned by the public and ridiculed and laughed at by passers-by. They grow up to be a burden on society, living out their miserable lives until snatched away by an obscure death. The time has come when we have to discuss the meaning of mental retardation, to see if the mentally handicapped may not also have a real place in society and, more profoundly, if they have a role to play in human history and in the future of the world.

Out of the thousands of mentally handicapped children born in India, quite a large proportion are educable and, with proper care, guidance and training, they can become useful members of society.

Care for the mentally handicapped should no longer be treated as a mere act of charity but as a problem involving social obligations. The enlightened public in the Western Countries have accepted responsibility for the mentally handicapped, and vigorous efforts are being made in every country and community to establish training centres for such children, to train them to become useful citizens or at least to be able to help themselves.

In India a few institutions have been started here and there, but these do not even meet a fraction of the need of this country. No accurate information is available regarding the number of mentally deficient children. However, on the basis of some rough estimates this country might have about 18 lakhs of mentally retarded children requiring special educational treatment. When compared with the physically handicapped as per the figures given below you will notice that there are many more mentally retarded than the blind and deaf for whom provisions have been made more adequately.

Category	Approximate Number of children between 6 and 14 years	Schools functioning in India
Blind :	4,47,000	115
Deaf :	2,23,500	71
Orthopædically handicapped	} 5,00,000	..
Mentally handicapped		
	} 18,00,000	34

The enlightened public, especially the Christian commu-

nity, should view this matter with grave concern and do something about it urgently.

The Training of the Mentally Retarded

The education of the mentally handicapped children is difficult and laborious. We must use all the resources of human patience, all the intuitions of love and all the latest medical and educational techniques to help the child to speak, to write, to acquire knowledge, to work and to adapt himself to his environment. The helper must possess great flexibility and avoid either of two extremes. On the one hand, he must avoid too much discipline and over-organization of leisure time which throttles development of true personality and gives rise to revolt; on the other hand, he must avoid giving too much liberty, as this may lead to boredom and to morbid expressions of sexuality which are often born in boredom. Our role as helper is to organize their periods of leisure, to lead our handicapped charges to the point where they can use their own leisure periods without getting bored. This is where our Christian men and women can fit in—lending their time and effort in the rehabilitation of the mentally retarded, going all out to support institutions which are catering to the needs of the mentally retarded.

Among the mentally retarded, you will find such a variety of temperaments and contrary tastes that it presents quite a problem for community living. Therefore it leads us to ask the question: What sort of homes should be provided for such children—the large centre or the small home?

While the children are young it is good to have a well-organized and disciplined environment, but as they grow older a smaller home is preferable to enable them to give full expression to their individuality and develop their personalities. All this means money and personnel. But the resources will come if we are in earnest and really serious about the welfare of our mentally retarded people.

The Role of the Christians in the World of the Mentally Retarded

We Christians have our duty to these mentally handicapped children and grown-ups. We have to respect them and treat them as human beings. It is up to us to give them an element of beauty, a home warm with love, where the handicapped person can freely express himself in words and actions, where he feels he is needed and where he can reach

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out doing good to others. Mentally retarded they may be, but they are human and have hearts and feelings just like any other human being. Even the most severely retarded child seems to draw strength and courage from tender, loving care based on realistic understanding and recognition of his need. It is important also to help the parents of such children through counselling and guidance programmes. Most often the parents of such children are having feelings of guilt and of avoidance. But at the same time they should be prevented from establishing a false façade of over-indulgence, over-acceptance and superficial love. It is time we understood clearly that care for the handicapped is our responsibility. It is no longer a mere act of charity but a problem involving social obligations. It is also a responsibility of the State to make adequate provision for the education, protection and welfare of the mentally handicapped.

In a world which is continually growing harder, more bent on pleasure-loving and amassing riches, where kindness

is drowned in a mounting tide of efficiency, the mentally handicapped have a vital role to play, because they can be a continual reminder of the privileges of the Haves against the Have-nots. Their presence is a warning to men who do not use their knowledge and ability to make the world more just and brotherly, men who do not strive to bridge the ever-widening gap between the rich and the poor and who are unable to account for their talents to the Giver of all good things.

In conclusion I would say that the mentally handicapped is not an outcast or a failure; he is a worthy person—a living temple of God. Through his weakness he throws out a challenge to the mighty, the powerful, the rich, the strong in body and mind. Deprived though he be in certain respects, yet he often radiates a richness far superior to that of the ordinary human being in that the mentally retarded have the qualities of the heart which predominate over those of the mind: qualities of simplicity, humility and love.

The Ministry to the Deaf

SORNAM DAVID,* *Madras*

The ability of man to communicate with his fellowman is the major skill that differentiates him from animals. This gift comes to us very easily because we can hear and it enables us to get education, and knowledge and also to live happily with others. But the deaf are handicapped immensely because they cannot hear and therefore cannot communicate.

This is a most serious handicap compared to other handicaps. The blind and orthopaedically handicapped have major handicaps too, but they are not deprived of the power of communicating with others. So they are able to get on in life better than the deaf.

Deafness is very difficult to understand since the handicap is not seen outwardly and the person appears as if he has no problems. But when we compare him with a hearing person, we can understand his problem better. From his birth the deaf person has never heard sound; so he has not heard anyone speak. A hearing baby becomes used to his mother's comforting words and the tone of her voice and slowly understands when she or others at home talk to him. He listens to the sounds of animals and birds, the different noises around and also the spoken words, even while he is engaged in play. This helps him understand words like 'milk', 'doll', 'come' and 'go' and to recognise the sounds of stirring of milk, opening of doors, etc.

He is satisfied when he hears that his mother is in the house, though she is not near him. With a hearing baby, understanding comes before speaking. So he soon learns to talk by imitating others, and his speech becomes better as he is able to correct his speech. Thus his language develops quickly through listening.

The babyhood of a deaf child is not so pleasant as that of a hearing child. He has never heard sounds from his birth. So he has no knowledge of the loving and soothing words of his mother or her voice. He has to depend on her facial expression only and he is puzzled when she is out of his sight. Neither can he understand if she explains things to him. He does not hear anyone talking nor his own voice. Thus he never gets a chance to listen, to understand or imitate. So he grows up without language to express himself or to understand others.

Language is the medium of communication. But a deaf person who has never had the opportunity to pick up language on his own has no way of learning to communicate unless some one helps him. He cannot acquire language and he does not know his name or the names of things in the house. So he needs to be taught this with patience through lip-reading.

The parents and the other members of the family of a deaf child are the first ones to help him to learn language. They must take special interest in him and talk to him slowly and clearly so that he can understand their lip movements and learn words. For example when the child takes a bath his mother has to talk to him about it. 'Come and have a bath. Bring the soap. Where is your towel? Put your towel there.' The child looks at her face and watches her lip movements and little by little understands the words—soap, water, towel—as she repeats them every day. Thus, if he is talked to, about every happening, he will understand it and try to imitate. He can learn a little before he goes to school.

In school, he learns everything through lip-reading and writing. He learns to read, but he finds it difficult without help. Even though he makes out a lot through lip-reading, he cannot do perfectly as it is a difficult skill. So he is behind in general knowledge and appears like a backward child though he is as intelligent as a normal child.

We, who can hear, get a lot of information from where we are. We can hear a knock at the door or someone coming in and talking. We can gather information without seeing all this happening. We also get informed of a danger along the road or in the house. But the deaf do not get any such information and do not know what is happening beyond their immediate eye range.

The deaf person's main problem is that he cannot communicate with others. Though he can lip-read, it is very difficult to lip-read people who talk quickly or indistinctly. Also he cannot follow conversation among a group of people. Thus he tends to avoid the company of hearing people and suffers from loneliness and frustration.

With all these difficulties a deaf person has to live

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happily with the hearing world and has to enjoy life. So the question arises, what can we as Christians do to uplift these handicapped people? They are intelligent and physically capable of doing many things better than ordinary people, but they need sympathy and understanding from the hearing people.

According to statistics only 2% of the deaf in India are being educated. We need 50 more schools in Tamil Nadu alone apart from the 12 we have at present. If new schools were opened soon, many trained teachers would be required. At present, there is no regular teachers' training course in our state. There are not many teachers to take up teaching the deaf as a career. So, as Christians, we need to have a concern for opening new schools and for finding suitable dedicated teachers.

The deaf who are educated find it difficult when they want a job, as they realise that employees do not want to employ them. There is a difficulty in communication but this can be overcome with a little thought and a little patience. This is where we Christians can help

them to find their way in the hearing world. We have to ask ourselves why the devoted Christians do not take an interest in the deaf and do not come forward to help them in the educational field or give them jobs in their firms.

There are many kinds of training places for the hearing but only one for the deaf for the whole of India. So you can imagine their difficulty to get qualified to do anything. Is it not possible for us to open such training centres for the deaf?

We can see how great their needs are, but the workers and the facilities available are too few. As our Lord Jesus said—'The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few'—the harvest is ready to be harvested, but we need a lot of labourers.

The deaf do not want to live on charity, they want to be treated as ordinary people with sympathy and understanding. Let us then come forward to help our unfortunate brothers and sisters and to make them useful citizens.

Is there any Hope for the Blind?

EDWARD JONATHAN,* Palayamkottai

From the earliest time blindness aroused compassion. The term blindness itself needs explanation. It denotes visual handicap. The handicap varies according to the degree of sight retained and the age at onset of blindness.

The blind can be classified under four categories:

i. Those who were blind from birth and those who were blinded before the age of five. Children who have lost their eyesight before the age of five do not ordinarily retain any useful imagery.

ii. Those who became completely blind after the age of five.

iii. Those who are partially blind from birth or acquired partial blindness before the age of five.

iv. Those who acquired partial blindness after the age of five.

Blindness imposes three basic limitations.

The limitation is in the range and variety of experiences. The blind has to depend on the senses other than sight for knowledge of things and of men. The sense of seeing, unlike other senses, does help to identify distant objects. *E.g.* one can see a mountain or a running train from a distance.

Secondly, the limitation arises from the difficulty to move about. The blind is not able to move about freely without sighted help. This dependence on others does affect his social relationships and attitudes.

Thirdly, he is not able to control his environment and the self in relation to it. A blind child, who is alone in his room, hears a loud crash. He has to remain uncertain in regard to the cause as well as to the effect of the noise. He will be in a state of curiosity as well as in a state of anxiety until someone tells him what has occurred.

From infancy, he cannot acquire behaviour patterns on the basis of visual imitation. There is also detachment, in the social sphere, of the individual's life as he is not able to observe the facial expressions of others.

Blind children and adults in Western countries and Russia are helped to overcome to a large extent these limitations and are enabled to lead a useful, normal and happy life.

In ancient times, most of the blind were begging on street corners or in front of the churches or temples. Great

writers like Voltaire, Diderot and Rousseau called special attention to the condition and needs of the Blind. The positive approach of helping the blind to stand on their own legs came during the eighteenth century, when the first School for the Blind was started in Paris. In a few years, schools for the blind began to be established all over Europe, U.K., and Russia and U.S.A. Embossed scripts for the blind came into existence and finally the Braille script with six dots replaced all other forms of reading and writing for the blind. Most of the books are now available in Braille script for the blind. In addition, there are now talking books and tape recordings for the academic and recreational needs of the blind.

In all Western Countries and in Russia the Schools for the blind provide the following to the blind children:

i. The academic knowledge imparted is similar to that of the normal or ordinary schools;

ii. Vocational training is given;

iii. There are extra-curricular activities—music, drama, theatre and other amateur hobbies;

iv. Physical development is given much importance.

In Russia, vocational training starts in the pre-school group itself and the entire academic education is oriented towards training the students in mechanical processes and mental workings. The rehabilitation of the blind in the Soviet Union and other western countries is complete in all its aspects. Every blind person is employed and, in addition to his earnings, he gets a pension. He does not pay any tax. He gets free medical attention and free education. Either free transport facilities or concession in travel is available to him. Residential houses are provided. In machines operated by the blind, safety devices are provided. Special canteens are provided for blind workers in factories. There are crèches to take care of the children of the working mothers in the factory. There are also facilities for reading in libraries, sanatoria for rest, cultural and recreational activities, sports, lectures, music and drama.

In short, in western countries, a blind person lives a real life and takes part in all the social activities.

What is happening to the blind in India? In fact, this article is specially meant for the blind in India.

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It is estimated that there are 5 million blind people in our country. The total blind population of the world is 15 million. So, one third of the total are found in India. In India, there are nearly 150 schools for the blind and organizations working for the welfare of the blind. Much is being done by Missionary bodies, private organizations, State Govt. and Union Govt.; but because of the vastness of the problem, whatever is done has only touched the fringe of it. Though there are schools for the blind in every State, the majority of the blind adults are denied the protection which schools afford. On an average each school has 50 children. The first school for the blind in India was started by an American Missionary in Amritsar in 1887 and now it is functioning in Rajpur near Dehra Dun.

The second one was started in Palayamkottai in the year 1890. At Palayamkottai, there are now 340 blind boys and girls. In later years, schools for the blind were opened in all the States of India. Education is imparted upto VIII Std. or Matriculation level, and training in various handicrafts is given. Every State is trying its best to rehabilitate its trained blind in factories or workshops. In each factory, there must be a few jobs which blind people can do.

A six-man delegation from India including the writer of this article visited the U.S.S.R. during September 1970 under the Indo-Soviet Bilateral Cultural Exchange Programme to study the work for the blind in the Soviet Union. The delegation was impressed by the rehabilitation programme undertaken in the Soviet Union.

There are a number of enterprises all over Russia. Each enterprise employs at least 50% blind persons or more. In these enterprises are made a number of items including electric switches, oil filters, stoppers for wire and soft drink bottles and the like on a commercial scale. The raw materials are supplied by the Government, and the products are purchased by them.

The leader of this delegation was Shri Ram Das, Deputy Secretary to the Govt. of India, and, in the light of the observations of the Delegation in the Soviet Union, he has made several recommendations and I give below a few of them:

i. that every blind person, who is able and willing to work should be given employment, where necessary, in factories specially sponsored for their benefit.

ii. that a beginning can be made by giving a small monthly pension of Rs. 20 to every blind person.

iii. that suitable legislation should be introduced earmarking one to two per cent vacancies in the public and private sector for handicapped persons including the blind.

iv. that the manufacture of electrical switches and other electric appliances might be undertaken as a part of the project to expand the existing workshops for the blind in India and collaboration of the Soviet Union can be sought.

v. that a large number of workshops for the blind should be established in the country both by Central and State Govt. and in the voluntary section for which liberal assistance should be provided.

vi. that schools and other training establishments for the blind should undertake suitable vocational programmes in order to equip them with skills needed for factory work.

vii. that the National Centre for the Blind in Dehra Dun should develop a well equipped research unit for developing ways in which industrial processes can be simplified and make safety devices designed to meet the requirements of blind industrial workers.

Modern India is becoming increasingly conscious of its responsibility for its handicapped citizens. The Union, State Govt. and the Public are doing their best in educating, training and rehabilitating the blind. Because of acute unemployment among the sighted people, there are difficulties in finding suitable jobs for the blind. Therefore unless special preference is shown to the handicapped, they may not be employed at all.

In U.S.A., U.K. and other European countries, the blind are employed in industries along with sighted workers. This is being done in our country also, but the numbers are too large for all the need to be met. Workshops for the blind similar to those in Russia should also be started by Union and State Govt. and also by private organizations for the blind and every able-bodied blind person should be provided with a job either in open industries or in the special workshops for the Blind.

With the progress that has already been made and, taking into account the future plans for the rehabilitation of the Blind in India, it may not be too much to hope that there will be fulfilment of the words of the Prophet Isaiah: 'I will bring the blind by a way they knew not, I will lead them in paths which they have not known. I will make darkness light before them and crooked places straight. These things will I do and not forsake them.'

Christianity and the Handicapped

PAUL E. JEGANATHAN,* Madras

Different people look at the same situation differently. Take for instance the failure of electricity in an office which was housed in a basement where the staff were forced to work with the help of candle light. One man stopped by and said that the entire office looked like a house mourning a death. Another man who passed that way some time later exclaimed, 'Hey pal, what a lovely sight! How pleasing to the eyes!' One saw the gloom and the other the glow. Once a young pastor who stopped to greet the members of a choir shook my hand and remarked, 'Why, you have a radiant face!' Some other time, at a revival meeting a young man, perhaps of my own age, asked me if

I was not unhappy because I was handicapped. Two people view the same person with different eyes. Yes, one sees the glow and the other the gloom.

A physically handicapped person is far from being a gloomy or an unhappy person. If he is one it is high time he quit being so. 'Happiness is a habit', and the formula to cultivate it is a simple one. Whether normal or handicapped, all have moments of sorrow, of unhappiness, and of tears. Maybe in the case of a handicapped person this could be more frequent. But the fact remains that a handicapped person is not basically melancholic.

This is very true if such a person is a Christian. Is not

* Mr. Jeganathan, who is now Manager of the Madras Diocesan Office, is himself a 'handicapped' person, having been attacked by polio when he was four years old. Of himself he says, 'I am not one of those highly religious persons, yet being a Christian has made things so much easier and lighter for me.'—Ed.

Christianity a religion of happiness? Is not Christianity a practical religion? Then is it not possible for a Christian who is handicapped to be happy in his life?

Then there are others who say that a Christian who is handicapped is weak in faith, because, if he had sufficient faith in God, then surely God would rid him of his handicap. History abounds with lives of stalwarts of faith who, in spite of their faith, had to live with thorns in their flesh. Even the Scriptures are not void of such instances. The God whom we worship knows us even before we were conceived in our mothers' wombs. He has his plans for each one of us, and the handicapped are not a lot rejected by God. He has used them for great things.

There were times when Louis Pasteur wept bitterly because he could not carry arms to defend his country, but he was instrumental in saving the lives of millions of people by his scientific discoveries. Beethoven had been stone deaf, but his music thrills thousands all over the world. His musical compositions are wonderful—melodies beautiful and harmony perfect. In our own time we have Eugene Clarke, an organist, who is blind now but still continues to contribute gospel melodies. The God who had created these great men had been faithful and just to them and had never tempted them beyond their strength.

Earlier I said that if a physically handicapped person is gloomy or unhappy it was high time he quit being so. Even if one is not happy altogether, at least one should not wallow in self-pity, since this is a great danger. Happy are

those who can become absorbed in their daily work as worthwhile occupation, yes absorbed fully, heart and soul. Then they are aiming to do a worthwhile job in life, they are not aiming primarily at happiness. Happiness and all the rest are additions—inevitable ones. But if men would allow self-pity or unhappiness to gain an upper hand and are not absorbed fully in what they do then they are not doing anything worthwhile.

One of the worst things that can happen to handicapped people is to be left entirely to themselves. A handicapped person has the same needs and feelings as those of the able-bodied. 'In my opinion a disabled person must not hesitate to go forth, move around, meet and mix in company of both sexes. Make friends; why live with an inferiority complex written large on one's face? Be natural, feel normal, one is as good as another.'

Sadly enough the Church has not come forward to help the handicapped except by doling out charity and pity. Here the Church should change its concept of help. There are a number of ways by which the Church can bring happiness and good cheer in the lives of the handicapped. The Church can make these people feel important by allowing them, wherever possible, to take part in church activities. This will go a long way in developing a sense of usefulness and assurance in the minds of the handicapped and make them feel worthwhile members of the Church and of the society in which they live and make them good witness for God.

The Congregation and the Handicapped

JEAN BALD,* Vellore

'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison, and did nothing for you?'

We may well picture the asking and answering of this question today. In India where we have so many examples of these and many other social evils we Christian people could get really despondent about the size of the task which Christ has given us.

Let us look at it in the light of our present-day resources. There are medical treatment facilities, services for the blind, the deaf, the crippled and orphan, health education and nutritional schemes to prevent illness, many specialized educational courses to teach people how to make the most of their environment and to enjoy life instead of suffering the evils of society.

Though these facilities exist in India they are still not available throughout the country. Communication is still a problem and many people don't know what services exist because they live far from them. Even in the cities people are relatively uninformed. Could we make it our duty as Christians to make these services known? When the numbers asking for them increase could we be prepared to agitate for more and take it upon ourselves to help in providing these services?

Rehabilitation and Social Services are among the newer professions. What more directly satisfying career could a young person have? Yet intelligent Christian young people are not coming forward in sufficient numbers for training for such work. They all want to be engineers, scientists and doctors. Is prestige the only criterion in choice of a

career? Is this a Christian attitude? (See Matthew 19:30). Can our young people be helped to seek first the Kingdom of Heaven and then find that all else is added?

If we look at the various handicaps we find that some are preventable and some appear not to be—on the one hand the large numbers of children daily becoming crippled by poliomyelitis when it could be largely prevented and on the other hand the paraplegic who was injured in a road accident through no fault of his own.

But some road accidents *can* be prevented if driving conditions are improved, if vehicles are in good order and if drivers take sufficient care. Perhaps that could be a campaign for a Christian congregation. Children can be taught 'road sense', road crossings near schools can be manned by responsible adults, and often this is done by volunteers—maybe a Congregation could initiate the scheme and invite non-Christian friends to co-operate.

Prevention of injuries and illness could be a really worthwhile project for a Christian congregation to tackle. It could be an excellent way of looking together outside the confining walls of the church buildings, the Christian compounds, and restricted work areas of many Christian institutions into the community at large. It could be a way of getting to know our neighbours of other faiths and learning to co-operate for the good of the whole community.

Now, what of the handicapped we do have with us? Their greatest need is acceptance—the feeling that other people accept them as they are, taking notice of their abilities more than their disabilities. Of course, we all know there are many disabled who exploit their disabilities in order to beg for money. They are a special rehabilitation

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problem (and even more so the persons who exploit them). Quite apart from these are the many handicapped people who *would* benefit from our practical expression of concern for them—giving a job opportunity, teaching a skill which may help them to earn, helping them get to school, letting them contribute their talents in any community effort in order that they may feel useful citizens instead of a burden on society.

What about discussing employment of handicapped people at your next Rotary Club meeting? But first of all get informed about what handicapped people can do. . . . Deaf machine-minders do well because they are not distressed by the noise. Blind assembly workers concentrate well on jobs they can do, and sometimes make skilled inspectors of finished products because of their acutely sensitive sense of touch. If you are interested in accepting the challenge of employing the handicapped, go to the experts and ask them what the deaf, the blind or the crippled *can* do. Some employers in Hyderabad, where the idea of employing the handicapped is just becoming accepted, have found that a recommended handicapped employee is a better risk than an unknown able-bodied person.

Some Indian cities have special employment registers for the handicapped, some have vocational evaluation schemes, and have also recommended that a handicapped employee might be engaged without pay for the first six months while he is learning the job and proving his worth. During that time the State concerned will pay a living allowance to the person concerned. If your State doesn't do these things perhaps it is time people started thinking and talking about it. Do you know anybody in a position of authority? Can you ask your political leaders about it? Every time we let an opportunity slip we are failing those who need our support.

While we need to have wide horizons in our total consideration of the problems of the handicapped, let us

also remember those within our own gates. Are all our church buildings and meeting places accessible for the handicapped? A gently sloping ramp of concrete is not a big investment and yet what a difference it can make to the person in a wheelchair. Once inside the building is there space for the wheelchair? Can the member hear and see well enough?

Thoughtfulness means so much and costs nothing! To assist the Presbyter and Pastorate Committee we can notify if a communicant cannot get to the communion rail, or to the service at all.

Some churches have an organizer of transport for old, sick or handicapped persons. This (or accompanying on foot) may be another avenue of service for members.

In Sunday School let us make provision for physically or mentally handicapped children, not calling attention to the disability but treating them normally and making sure they get maximum opportunity for participation, and maybe giving extra visits during the week.

Adult disabled persons may be useful on committees and to undertake special responsibilities in the Church. This might be the outlet they need to serve others.

Finally, let us stop for a minute to think about the nature of handicaps and why we should have handicapped persons in our midst. Everyone has some handicap or imperfection. It is not always physical; some handicaps are mental; some are intellectual; some a difficulty of personality adjustment; some are emotional (such as anxiety) and some may be social. If we can recognize humbly that God has a purpose in making people different, in giving each some abilities to use and some disabilities to overcome, and that in helping each other we will find one day that Christ's words may have meaning for us. . . .

'Anything you did for one of my brothers here, however humble, you did for me.'

Christian Conference on Development

Deenabandupuram—from 7th to 11th September

Outlines on

YOUTH WORK AND DEVELOPMENT

(Presented by MR. VICTOR PANDIAN, Director for Youth Work, C.S.I. Synod Board)

Situation

We are all anxious that our young people should actively participate in the Development programmes of the church and the nation. At the same time, we are also disappointed when young people do not respond to our expectation.

We must not forget that unless we have keen concern for the young people in our churches, unless we teach and train them in the proper way, unless we organise them in the churches and challenge them under trained leadership, we will not be able to mobilise them for positive contribution to the life of the church and the world.

Experience teaches us that, wherever the churches are concerned for the younger generation, understand their weaknesses and potentialities and contribute to their well-being, the younger generation have responded to the call of the church effectively.

It is a pity to note that, even though the church leaders are able to recognise the need for Special Ministries towards the young people which intend to provide the context and

the incentives for a full personal life, work among the young is in a neglected stage in several parts of South India. How can we mobilise the strength of the youth for development programmes of the church? There is a proof that our young people have joined the destructive forces in our country to-day, since they do not find any meaning in their own lives in the church. There is a great deal of truth and justice in the criticisms which young people are making of our Society. We cannot ignore them. We have to take the young people of our Society and of the church more seriously than we have done in the past.

The Church and Youth in God's World

The church can do tremendous harm or make a tremendous contribution in this field of Youth work. Harm will be done if the churches (continue to) judge a younger generation without blaming the adults at the same time for creating the environment in which the young live. Harm will be done if the churches pronounce moral absolutes on private

matters while they are silent on public matters like poverty and exploitation. Harm will be done if the churches require from the young what the adults do not practise. Harm will be done if the churches speak without having really studied and understood the issues at hand. Harm will be done if the churches speak to a younger generation without hearing and knowing the words of their own young people. Harm will be done if the churches do not speak or act.

The churches will make a tremendous contribution, however, if they facilitate and join the studies about the contribution and needs of a younger generation, come to the defence of those who criticise society and help them to formulate programmes and act positively in response to this critique. The churches will make a tremendous contribution if they can think first of others and show their concern for the whole generation and not only for their own youth. The churches will make a tremendous contribution if they train youth leaders for non-church youth work and if they give their energy, financial aid and best contribution to the study and abolition of illiteracy, hunger and unemployment. The churches will make a tremendous contribution if they can show that they are indeed concerned about youth themselves and not only about their souls.

Areas of Youth Participation

Young people must see their role with regard to Development in terms of 'Positive, Creative, Critical and Realistic participation'.

Positive, because from the Christian perspective we are convinced that God, through nation-building, is using it for the purpose of building up the Kingdom of God when there will be greater justice, equality, dignity and a fuller life for all.

Creative, because the young people have to hammer out new forms and concepts of political, ecumenical, social and cultural life.

Critical, because not all that happens in nation-building is good as contributing towards the dignity of man. So in this connection there is a prophetic role for young people.

Realistic, because Christian participation may not be naive. There must be an appreciation of the real situation. We have to grasp the facts and evaluate the possibilities before we put 'our shoulder to the plough'.

Education on Development

Youth have a greater stake in the process of development and so youth should make sure that, instead of shouting an empty slogan, there is a need for commitment to action. Orientation on development of young people is an immediate necessity. Seminars, conferences and teach-in programmes are to be organised at regional and diocesan levels with the following objectives:—

1. To understand the full meaning of Development.
2. To express the viewpoint of youth about the problems and opportunities of development.

3. To help the youth to be development-conscious.
4. To chalk out guide-lines for practical programmes that can be carried out by young people.
5. To study the social and cultural barrier for development.

Youth and Unemployment

The unemployment problem is much more serious than the Naxalite problem. The genesis of the Naxalite menace was rural unemployment: the largest single factor contributing to discontent in the country is the problem of educated and uneducated unemployment. The problem has not only defied solution so far, but is assuming ever-increasing dimensions.

To solve the problem, ways have to be found for creating at least 28 lakhs jobs, about 18 lakhs to absorb the existing incumbents on the registers of the employment exchanges and another 12 lakhs for those persons that would be added to the ranks of unemployment by 1974, or the end of the Fourth Plan. The number of persons of all categories on the live registers in employment offices in Tamil Nadu waiting for employment as on June 1970 was 3,78,466 (*The Hindu*). There are many more thousands who have not gone to the employment offices and many more unemployed youth in the rural area. Such a situation simply invites the problem of a destructive and rebellious younger generation. This situation may cause danger to the democratic set-up in our country. Thousands of our Christian young people are unemployed. These young people are calling on the church to accept this new challenge and to come forward to help them. The church has to explore the possibilities of opening more Technical and Vocational Training Centres in South India to develop among the educated youth the mentality of a job-creator and not that of a job-seeker.

Conclusion

Young people are frustrated and restless and there is a discontent among them over the slow rate of progress and disenchantment over the lack of opportunities for employment. The youth participation in development programmes at present is a mere sprinkling here and there in this vast land of ours but there are examples to show in our country how varied and effective had been youth participation in certain fields of development due to able leadership, challenge of effective planning, fresh and clear imagination and youth participation in planning. We cannot lead young people like a flock of sheep into a set pattern of working for development. The paternalistic approach by leaders towards youth will not achieve success.

Youth are neither conservative nor liberal but agencies of immediate change. In them is the need to do something to change the world, but this impatience of youth to benefit and participate can become development potential of the finest and most productive kind, under dynamic leadership.

News from the Community Service Centre, Madras

'A little bit of everything' seems to describe the programmes which have taken place at the Community Service Centre during the last few months, leading up to the First Anniversary celebrations on September 4th.

The Contemporary issue of secularisation was studied in April, when the Centre collaborated with Max Mueller Bhavan in organising a 2-day seminar on 'Is the idea of a secular society compatible with Hindu Society?'. Searching papers were given by Prof. A. K. Saran (from Simla), Mr. C. Badrinath, Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan (Institute of Advanced Philosophy, Madras University), Dr. Mathew Kurian (Trivandrum), Bishop Newbigin, Dr. M. M. Thomas (CISRS) and others and there was much hard thinking about the development of secularisation in India.

This subject was also studied during a series of evening classes entitled 'Politics for Intelligent Citizens', held at the Centre during July and August. These classes were inaugurated by Dr. M. Santhosham, M.P. The first half dealt with academic issues, followed by several sessions in which representatives of various political parties explained their ideologies and programmes.

Social problems too, have been our concern. In April, a short training course on 'How to be effective in an emergency' was conducted in Anna Nagar—not the elegant Madras suburb, but a very different slum colony off Egmore High Road. There evening meetings attracted the interested attention of a large number of the residents who much appreciated the opportunity of learning how

to co-operate with the police, the fire service, the Corporation and the government in dealing with fires, floods and epidemics.

Problems of leadership in the local congregation were studied by the members of pastorate committees of 4 CSI and Methodist Churches at a meeting on July 11th, and another kind of leadership, that given by the cinema, was evaluated at an interesting and unusual weekend conference of young people from the CSI, Lutheran and Roman Catholic Churches. Under the title 'The Good, the Bad and the Ugly', this group examined the influence of the Cinema on Young people today, with help from Dr. L. Darnaue of Gurukul, and Mr. Abdul Kareem, editor of *Tamil Cinema*.

To begin the Centre's second year of existence, a week's course on 'Effective Management in Education' was held, attended by correspondents, headmasters and headmistresses of several city high schools. Those participating studied subjects like Productivity in Management, Human Relations, Introducing Change, Work Allocation and Simplification, Decision-Making, Group Techniques, Office Records and Practical Accounting. They were convinced that they would be able to handle more efficiently the many administrative problems which face them daily.

Programmes at the Centre are planned to consider the problems of contemporary life, both religious and secular, and we warmly welcome the support and interest of all those concerned with relating their Christian faith to today's world.

The Late Mr. S. Kanagaraj Elias

Mr. Kanagaraj Elias was born on 27th June, 1910, to Mr. & Mrs. Peter Elias. Mr. Peter Elias was a catechist working in the old Methodist area in Ikkadu, Chingleput Dist. He was the only son to his parents and was named 'Samuel' by them since they believed that God had given them a son after many years of their fervent prayer. Mr. Kanagaraj had his early education in Wesley High School and later at the Madras Christian College. He worked as a teacher in Goudie High School, Tiruvallur, and in Kellett High School, Triplicane. After serving in these institutions for some years, he was called to Tambaram to develop the then Corley Higher Elementary School into a High School. He became the first headmaster of this institution in 1941 and was there till 1968. When he began his work in this institution, it is said that the institution was in thatched huts with mud walls. He was responsible for its present spacious buildings.

Mr. Kanagaraj was a regular member of his church and took keen interest in its activities. He was also a local preacher preaching the word of God in different churches as and when he was called to do so. It is said that he was one of those who were responsible for building the

church in West Tambaram which is now known as the CSI Church. He was very humble and gentle and was respected by everyone. He loved both rich and poor. Whatever work was entrusted to him he did it with diligence and perseverance. He was very honest and faithful in all his dealings. He loved peace and was often called upon to serve on Arbitration Boards. He was able to tackle even ticklish problems by his kind and soft words. He had a way of deciding things calmly after thoughtful consideration.

Mr. Elias was first elected Hon. General Secretary by the Synod in 1964 and served the church for one term, i.e. till 1966. When the CSI felt the need for a full-time General Secretary, he was elected by the Synod in 1968 as its first full-time Secretary, which post he held till his death. His sudden death is a great loss to the life and work of the whole Church. May his soul rest in peace.

—From the talk by

BISHOP NEWBIGIN,
at the Memorial Service.

'A Mass Movement in the Mass Movement Area'

An Official Rejoinder

Mr. Theodore Baskaran's article came as a surprise and shock to the Church Leaders of the Tiruchi-Tanjore Diocese of the Church of South India. It is misconceived, misinformed and unfounded. It is full of false assumptions.

Naturally, the Church Leaders would like to question the bonafides of Mr. Theodore Baskaran. How is he competent to write this article? He is, as the Editor's footnote said, an officer in the employ of the Central Government living in Vellore—a place 250 to 300 miles from the said 'Mass Movement Area'. Further he had moved out of the Tiruchi-Tanjore Diocese years ago.

Mr. Baskaran should have been fully aware that the article he was writing would have far-reaching consequences as the *South India Churchman* has a wide circulation among the Missionary bodies in the West. Therefore it would have been most courteous on the part of Mr. Baskaran if he had sent the article to the Bishop of the Diocese for his perusal before publication. This would have given an opportunity to the Bishop to place the true facts before Mr. Baskaran. Now Mr. Baskaran has caused infinite damage to the Church of South India in general and the Diocese of Tiruchi-Tanjore in particular by his hasty action.

Now we shall try to dissect his article. The very first paragraph has no relevance to the theme of the article. The writer gives a graphic description of a scene that took place years ago, when he was perhaps at an impressionable age. He seems to remember the very words of the speaker, 'You are all sons of God, in union with Jesus Christ', which boomed across the shed. What bearing does this incident have in the present context? Perhaps it is put there for dramatic effect.

The writer says, 'More than 20,000 village Christians, many of them first generation converts, have come out of the Church of South India led by two Pastors. Reason? Discrimination based on Caste.'

The writer assumes two things—that 20,000 village Christians have left the C.S.I. and that the Diocese of Tiruchi-Tanjore is practising discrimination based on caste. Both are wrong assumptions. The figure 20,000 is a highly exaggerated one—perhaps he would have heard it as 2,000, and even this number is yet to be statistically established.

The writer himself says that the village Christians who left the C.S.I. belong to the 'Madari' caste. Who are the Madaris? They are poor landless labourers belonging to what we call 'the Scheduled Caste'. At the beginning of the century, these Madaris were greatly oppressed by the 'Goundars'—the landlords of that area. These people became Christians because they had developed a fear complex for the Goundars and they sought the protection of the Church against their cruel masters. Also the Christian Missionaries gave them material benefits out of a humanitarian consideration. So the vast majority of the Madaris came into the Christian fold for material benefits. They did not come into the fold out of conviction but came in for convenience. Their Christianity was not deep-rooted. A large number of them visited the Palni temple as usual even after becoming Christians. Their morals were very loose. The marriage vows were more honoured in the breach than in the observance of them. They are a problem people to Presbyters for most of the time.

The Madaris are a back-sliding people. Their going back to Hinduism was not anything new. Several Madari villages back-slided in the 'thirties. In recent years, i.e. in 1958 and

1963, there had been an exodus of Madari Christians outside the Church. Our writer has failed to mention this fact.

The writer has spoken very highly of the two Presbyters who led the Madaris outside the established Church. Both of them are discredited Presbyters. The Presbyter with a dramatic talent had misappropriated large sums of Church money. There were enquiries; but fortunately he had made good the amount before he left. The other Presbyter was rather worldly and self-seeking. It was alleged that he was mis-using the CASA food supplies and had amassed much money. He was caught red-handed while transporting CASA food supplies in a taxi at night from his house. There was a Commission of Enquiry which found that the allegations were true. He appealed to the Diocesan Court and he resigned and left before the Diocesan Court gave its decision.

Regarding showing discrimination based on caste, it is a matter yet to be proved. Our writer himself has given a clue to the answer. He says that two communities, namely the Adi-Dravidas and the Madaris, embraced Christianity in large numbers in the Twenties in the 'Mass Movement Area', namely Karur-Dharapuram area. The writer himself says, 'From time immemorial bitter rivalry had marked the relationship between the Adi-Dravidas and the Madaris. Though both of them were outside the pale of caste structure, they kept fighting for supremacy over each other. As both of them were agricultural labourers, professional rivalry added to this. But even after coming into the fellowship of Christ the rivalry persisted.' The writer continues, 'Like most of the castes in the Tamil Nadu, the Madaris also have "Community Discipline"'. The two Presbyters were instantaneously accepted as their leaders and the Madari teachers and evangelists began to look up to them for guidance. There were frequent occasions for alleging discrimination.' The Diocese of Tiruchi-Tanjore does not consist only of Christians coming from these two communities. There are thousands and thousands of other Christians who came from other communities—Nadars, Vellalas, Vannias and others. The Madaris unlike others are highly caste-conscious. The two Presbyters under the pretext of championing the cause of their kinsmen have been interfering too much in the Church administration. They wanted to have an upper hand in the matter of appointments. They openly canvassed in Church elections and even interfered in school promotions and College selections. The two Presbyters made a nuisance of themselves in every Church activity. How can any Diocese brook such indiscipline? If any Madari was not appointed for a post immediately the Diocese was accused of discrimination based on caste against the Madaris. If a Madari lost an election, immediately the members were accused of discrimination.

If the Diocese had been practising discrimination, it would not have made the 'Madari' Presbyter with the dramatic talents the Diocesan Secretary for Evangelistic work. He was in fact organising and directing the evangelistic effort of the Diocese. Everyone co-operated with him. He was not neglected or discouraged just because he is a Madari. Every opportunity was given to him to make use of his talents for the glory of God. If the Diocese had been practising discrimination, how could a poor Madari girl be selected to be trained at CMC Vellore to be a doctor, all her expenses in the College being paid?

The leaders did not break away just to face sorrow and suffering. Even when they were working under the C.S.I. they were having talks with the Church of Christ people—an American Sectarian Organisation with plenty of money to spend. They made a bargain for higher wages, and now they have joined the Church of Christ on more attractive terms. Each Presbyter is paid, we are told, Rs. 750 a month and they have learnt to feather their nest.

The writer was not correct in saying that there was not going to be any change of doctrine or in their ways of worship. They have joined a Sectarian Organisation which does not recognise Infant Baptism. Now many of them have taken a second baptism against our belief in the creed which says, 'I believe in one baptism for the remission of sins'.

The public must also know how the Diocese treated them when they definitely opted for breaking away. The Diocese settled the accounts fully to their satisfaction paying them all their dues like arrears of salary, Provident Fund, Medical Fund, etc. Even today as usual their children are admitted in our Boarding homes without any discrimination. The door is kept open for them to come back. The Diocese is confident that most of the people who broke away will come back to us.

It is to be noted with satisfaction that, in spite of the false hopes given by one Mr. Anderson of Dallas, Texas, a representative of the Sectarian Group through the two Presbyters, there are still cases of individuals among the Madaris—more than a remnant to build a new Jerusalem. There are hundreds of village laymen who stand firm in

their simple but deep-rooted faith, and they say, 'We shall not split the body of Christ.' We shall not seek another Baptism as our first Baptism is valid and eternal.' There is one Vedamanikkam, a Madari Evangelist, who was cajoled and offered attractive salary and who is even now threatened and persecuted because he had not joined them. He is willing to face all trials and troubles for the sake of one Church. We can call him a Prophet who has sprung up among the Madaris. Already our Bishop has received several letters with mass signatures showing their allegiance to the C.S.I. The Diocese is taking all necessary steps to strengthen their faith by teaching mission, holding conventions at various levels, and by training local lay leaders.

Just one piece of advice for people like Mr. S. Theodore Baskaran who are outstanding laymen with great talents and influence. What a great service Mr. Baskaran could have done, if instead of rushing to the press with his half-baked article, he had cared to get the facts from the diocesan leaders and made use of his influence in the ministry of reconciliation. Both the parties were known to him. Both the parties would give due weight to his words. When such is the position why did Mr. Baskaran not contact the Bishop and the other Diocesan Officers to give his advice in solving the problem?

Thanjavur,
20-10-70

S. R. PANDYAN,
Lay Secretary,
Tiruchi-Tanjore Diocese.

Announcements

THE 1971 SESSION OF THE NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP ACADEMY

(A Six Month Residential Post-graduate Course)

1st May 1971 to 15th October 1971

at the

ECUMENICAL CHRISTIAN CENTRE, WHITEFIELD,
BANGALORE

The Academy aims at helping Editors, Writers, Pastors, Social Workers, Lecturers, Political Party Workers and others to study the forces at work in the political, economic, social, cultural and religious areas of life in the Indian society, with a view to enable them for an intelligent and active participation in our great adventure of nation building. The course will help to strengthen the concern of the Church for the secular life of the nation. The 1970 session was attended by Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant candidates (men and women) from Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Madras, Kerala and Indonesia.

Lectures by competent professors from various Universities, and seminars, study tours, research and practical training. The course will be undergirded by Biblical studies and lectures on the Christian understanding of Man and Society.

Admissions will be limited to twelve University or Theological Graduates, men and women in the age group of 25-35. Preference will be given to candidates possessing field experience. Fee for the course (tuition, food, accommodation and study tours) will be Rs. 250 (Rupees two hundred and fifty) per month per person.

DECEMBER 1970]

Apply for Prospectus and Application blanks before January 15, 1971. Last date for Registration of candidates is March 15, 1971.

Whitefield,
Bangalore, India.
29-9-70.

THE REV. M. A. THOMAS,
Director,
Ecumenical Christian Centre.

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Theology Department

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Graduates of any recognized University, and candidates who have already passed Serampore P.D. with distinction are eligible for admission in the B.D. Course. L.Th. diploma-holders who have passed the P.D. English papers also apply for admission in the 2nd year of B.D.

Copies of Prospectus and forms of application for admission can be obtained free of cost from the undersigned.

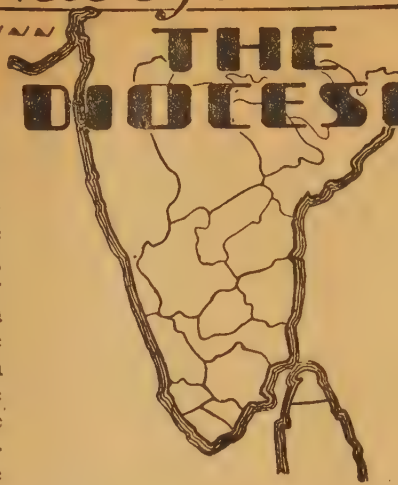
A few scholarships are also available for deserving students.

Intending candidates are invited to apply without delay.

There is also a possibility of opening courses in M.R.S. & M.Th. Those who are interested may write to the Principal for further information.

M. N. BISWAS,
Principal,
Serampore College,
Serampore, Hooghly,
West Bengal.

THE DIOCESES



TIRUCHI-TANJORE

Students Social Work Camp at Annamangalam

Fifty-five students of the Pre-University and Degree classes and three teachers of the Bishop Heber College, Tiruchirapalli, lived in a camp for 10 days in Annamangalam village in Perumbalur Taluk and worked with the villagers in digging big irrigation wells. The camp was organised by the College Social Service League and the College Planning Forum in collaboration with Deenabandu Rural Life Centre. The students and teachers stayed in the village primary school and identified themselves very well with the villagers.

The work camp commenced on the morning of Sunday, 27th September, and was over on the evening of Thursday, 6th October. The students worked on four wells and in each well 6 to 8 villagers and 14 students worked for over 5 hours a day. The daily work commenced at 6.30 a.m. and continued till 11.30 a.m. with a short break for breakfast at the well site. Work over, the students relaxed in the school buildings.

The evening programmes included games, Bible study, workshop and educational programme. The students also put up cultural programmes to the great merriment of the villagers. The whole body of villagers took part in these programmes spontaneously and the village youth, in particular, mixed very well with students.

Miss Walpole and Rev. Paulraj were the leaders for the Bible study which was well tuned to the problems of the day. Miss Walpole began with the political and religious teachings of prophet Amos and later dealt with the love of God for His people found in the Book of Hosea. Rev. Paulraj continued the Bible study and spoke of God's love for His people through the teachings of Jesus Christ and His disciples. He also acted as a resource person for the educational programmes and guided the discussion that took place.

The educational programmes that came up after the Bible study were very well attended and most students spoke up in these. Prof. D. Chellappa of the PMT College, Usilampatti, was the main speaker in these programmes. His three talks on Communism, Leninism, and Naxalites with the Christian answer to these were very informative and enlightening. Prof. Y. W. Blessed Singh and Mr. J. D. Jeya-

chandran also conducted a few programmes on Gandhism, Marxism and the problems of India today. It was agreed that the new world order should have economic homogeneity *minus* violence *plus* spiritual values.

During the camp the students carried out a comprehensive socio-economic survey of the village with particular reference to the state of unemployment and under-employment. The data is going to be of immense use particularly to the Land Banks and Land Mortgage Banks in the taluk.

During the camp the students have found many an opportunity to talk to the villagers on Planning, development, agricultural problems, rural health and the like and both parties have learned a great deal from each other. The camp opened with a reception given to the students by the Panchayat President, leaders of the local churches, the village school master and the owners of the four wells. The Rt. Rev. Solomon Doraiswamy visited the camp one day and spoke to the students on the importance of manual work. The leaders of the camp were Prof. Blessed Singh and Rev. E. Durairaj.

RAYALASEEMA

The First Youth Convention of the Rayalaseema Diocese

For the first time in the history of the Rayalaseema Diocese a Youth Convention took place in Jammalamadugu from 8th-11th October, 1970. Nearly 170 delegates, of whom 70 were girls, came from all over the diocese, journeying through the uncertain routes during the heavy rainy season. Some of the students had to sacrifice their holidays, and villagers their daily cooly, to attend this conference, but all thought it well worth while. A great variety of age groups and professions made it an interesting experience for

those who attended a conference for the first time.

The main theme of the conference was 'Christ the Way'. Devotions, addresses and group discussions were centred round that theme. The first day was the day of laymen. The Conference was declared open by Dr. William Cutting and the inaugural address was given by Dr. D. M. A. Ratnaraj, Medical Superintendent of the C.S.I. Hospital, Jammalamadugu. The first theme address was given by a lady doctor, Miss Sarala Elisha of Kugler Hospital, Guntur, on 'Jesus Christ the Supreme Way'. Next day she gave another theme address on 'Jesus Christ the Redeeming Way'. Mr. Victor Pandyan, Youth Secretary of the C.S.I., Synod, addressed the conference on 'Jesus Christ the Transforming Way' and 'Jesus Christ the Inviting Way'. The Bible Study was conducted by Rt. Rev. C. S. Sundaresan, Bishop of the Diocese, on St. Mark and his gospel. The other talks were given by Rev. K. Basi Reddy on 'The Role of Youth in Evangelism', Rev. L. V. Azariah on 'Christian Youth and Stewardship' and Rev. B. G. Prasada Rao, Secretary of the Bible Society, on 'The Christian Youth and the Bible' and 'The Christian and Service'.

We listened to beautiful music from several groups of students in between the sessions. Delegates were given a chance to show their mettle in the entertainment programme and in the session when they had a quiz on the Bible and Lyric book.

The entire assembly was in procession on the last day through the main streets of the town singing Lyrics, shouting Bible slogans and Bible passages, selling gospels and distributing tracts.

Some of the significant events were the Bharatha Natyam with Christian lyrics, Telugu Qawali on Bible theme, a drama on St. Paul and a session when the youth gave frank expression to their reactions.

G.T.A.

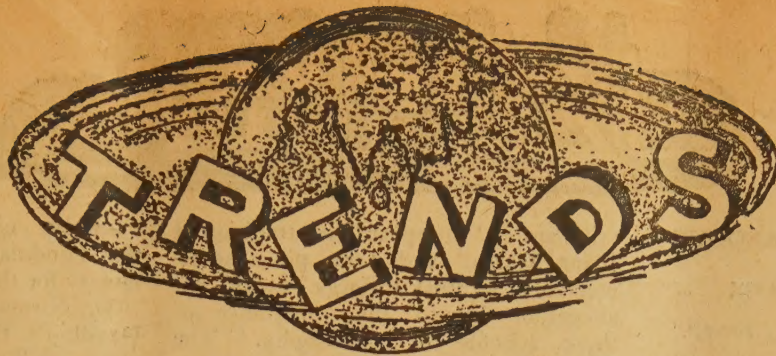
M.T.

MYSORE (Central)

We left Bangalore on 1 July and got down from the plane at Frankfurt next morning. From there we took another plane to Munich and then the bus to Oberammergau. This is a village in W. Germany where the famous Passion

(Continued on page 17)

[DECEMBER 1970]



Columbian Urges 'Radical Solution' at World Lutheran Youth Meeting

Thonon, France—A Colombian Roman Catholic Priest, Father Rene Garcia, said there seems no answer to the poverty and exploitation of Latin America's masses short of 'a totally radical solution'.

Father Garcia, who works in a slum outside Bogota and is a spokesman for the radical Golconda Movement of Colombian priests, addressed the World Encounter of Lutheran Youth on: 'Towards a More Human World'.

Father Garcia said that Foreign imperialism is the major obstacle to the development of Latin America, and advocated the overthrow of those governments that profit from underdevelopment.

In Latin America, Father Garcia was particularly critical of several North American companies which he said 'get all the riches'.

Calling for a theology of social change for Latin America, Father Garcia said, 'We are part of the salvation of our time. When we speak about salvation, it means engagement in the movement for liberation. If we can

make the liberation of the people a concrete example of salvation, we can demonstrate the true meaning of the incarnation. We believe that revelation is not only a biblical concept but that God participates in the present moment.'

He acknowledged that this will mean suffering, 'but you don't have resurrection without crucifixion,' he reminded the young Lutherans who gave him their rapt attention for well over an hour. Several, including those from Latin American countries and others who recently travelled for two weeks in small groups throughout Spanish-speaking countries, expressed hearty agreement with Father Garcia's analysis.

EPS.

South African Presbyterians to Retain W.C.C. Membership

Cape Town—The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa voted 75 to 57 on September 22 to remain in the World Council of Churches. The Assembly also registered a protest against Prime Minister John

Vorster's threat in Parliament to act against Christian Churches in South Africa if they did not dissociate themselves from the Council.

The General Assembly reminded the Prime Minister 'that its only Lord and Master is Jesus Christ, that it may not serve other masters, and that its task is not necessarily to support the government in power but to be faithful to the Gospel'. At the same time the Church went on record as dissenting from the World Council's grants to African liberation movements, but said it must dissent at least as much from the violence inherent in the racial policies of the South African Government. Delegates voted not to pay their contribution of R. 500 (\$ 359) to the World Council but to give R. 300 (\$ 215) to the All-Africa Conference of Churches and the remainder to the South African Council of Churches.

Earlier in the week the assembly voted overwhelmingly to unite with the Bantu and Tsonga Presbyterian Churches to form the United Presbyterian Church of South Africa. The Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa—which has a membership of 60,000 of which 40,000 are white—would thereby merge with black churches having a membership of 50,000.

EPS.

News from the Dioceses—(Continued from p. 16)

Play is acted once every ten years by the people of the village in fulfilment of a vow made over 300 years ago.

The story of our Lord's life, from his Entry into Jerusalem to the Resurrection, is presented on a huge stage in a highly dramatic and artistic way. About 6,000 people from all over the world attend during the summer months each performance of the play which lasts from 8.30 in the morning until 5 in the evening, with a break for lunch.

This year there was criticism that the Play was anti-Jewish and that it showed in a very harsh way the conduct of the Jewish authorities, on account of whom our Lord was condemned to death and crucified. There was some truth in this and I recalled the days when the District Evangelistic Band used to tour throughout the State, presenting night by night in the villages, by magic lantern and *harikatha*, the story of Christ's life, death and resurrection. I hope that we did not speak so harshly of those for whom our Lord prayed as he was being nailed to the

Cross, 'Forgive them, Father! They don't know what they are doing'.

In England the two months, July and August, are holiday months and there were no important Services or Conferences to attend. But on 6 September a Mysore Diocese Reunion was arranged at a Methodist Church in South London. At 11 a.m. we had the C. S. I. Holy Communion Service; I was assisted by the Rev. H. K. Moulton. The lessons were read by Mr. Murray J. Culshaw, Miss Bridget Scott, and Sister Ivy Canova. A number of retired missionaries were present, and families from Bangalore and K.G.F. now settled in U.K. were also well represented. After the Service about 50 people sat down to a chicken curry and rice at an Indian Restaurant nearby.

We were glad to return to India in time for the meeting of C.S.I. Bishops and the Synod Executive at Vishranthi Nilayam, 21-25 September. Decisions on important matters concerning us were made in nominating the Rev. William V. Karl as a candidate for the

election of the panel of names for the bishopric in the Southern Diocese and the Rev. Dr. C. D. Jathanna for the Northern Diocese. The Synod also appointed a Board to elect and recommend to the Synod Executive the appointment of the two new Bishops. This Board consists of two Bishops, two presbyters and two laymen presided over by the Moderator.

Please remember in your prayers the Special Diocesan Councils which will meet at Hubli on 27 October and at Mysore on 30 October. The following prayer should be used in all our Churches.

Almighty God, look graciously on thy Church in this State and so guide with thy heavenly wisdom the minds of those to whom is committed the choice of two Bishops that we may receive faithful pastors who may feed thy flock: through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

N. C. SARGANT
(Bishop)



MAHATMA GANDHI AND HINDU-CHRISTIAN DIALOGUE

BY DR. NIRMAL MINZ

*C.L.S. for the C.I.S.R.S., 200 pp.,
Rs. 5'25.*

The Rev. Dr. Nirmal Minz in the book *Mahatma Gandhi and Hindu-Christian Dialogue*, which is the third in the Inter-Religious Dialogue Series published under the auspices of the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society, presents systematically the sources and the growth of the philosophy and humanism of Gandhiji and reasons logically how the liberal humanism and, much more, the life of Gandhiji can form the foundation of a fruitful Hindu-Christian Dialogue.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was essentially an Indian. He was deeply influenced by Indian heritage and inspired by Indian culture. In his life-long search after and experiment with truth he made the maximum use of his power of reason and intellect. He obeyed implicitly 'the still small voice' or 'the voice of the conscience', but many a time he arrived at conclusions not out of his intellectual convictions but out of his emotional attachment. Though the purity of his intentions is a matter beyond controversy, often his judgements were not unbiased and so were not correct.

The three ideas 'Satya', 'Ahimsa' and 'Swadeshi' can effectively summarise Gandhiji's philosophy. Gandhiji ardently believed that this world rests upon the bedrock of Satya. Though in his early days it was said that 'God is Truth,' later his philosophy was subjected to a radical change and he said, 'Truth is God.' Truth is determined by the dictates of the conscience. If 'Satya' is the embodiment of the static and permanent aspect of reality, 'Ahimsa' symbolises or represents the dynamic aspect of it. 'Swadeshi' has economic, social and spiritual meanings. Gandhiji said, 'The law of Swadeshi requires no more of me than to discharge my legitimate obligation towards my family by just means and the attempt to do so will reveal to me the universal code of conduct.'

Dr. Minz deserves congratulation for analysing systematically the sources of Gandhiji's philosophy. The main source of his philosophy may be traced to 'Bhagavadgita' which proclaims the gospel of 'Karma'. In spite of his

criticism of 'the speculative tradition of Jnana Marga' and 'the pious sentimentalism of Bhakti Marga' he did not altogether discard the importance of these schools of philosophy. The influence of Christ and his 'Sermon on the Mount' on Gandhiji was not less than these Hindu traditions. He, with prophetic vision, tried hard to combine harmoniously these systems of thought and the result was his concern for humanity. This might, according to Dr. Minz, be argued as the reason for the emergence of the Mahatma as a humanist.

The author exposes with great force that Gandhiji's life and thought could not have sprung solely from such an insufficient foundation as Hinduism. Especially Gandhiji's views on 'Ahimsa' could never have originated from the main-stream of Hinduism.

Like R. R. Diwakar and others Dr. Minz brands him as a liberal humanist and hastens to conclude that his concern for the human destiny which he shares with the religions Hinduism and Christianity can well form the foundation of a Hindu-Christian dialogue. Here it should be frankly admitted that there is no use trying to depict him as an 'unbaptised Christian' or 'a natural Christian' or anything of that sort as some have laboured to show. He was a convinced believer of Hinduism, it is true, but not of a Hinduism understood and attacked by many Christians. His Hinduism was crowned by humanism. This humanism had a very deep root, down to the bottom of his heart. His main concern was 'the nature and destiny of man'. Sure, Mahatma Gandhi was influenced by Jesus. He advised Hindus: 'I shall say to the Hindus that your life will be incomplete unless you reverently study the teachings of Jesus'. But he refused to accept Jesus Christ as the only begotten Son of God. He held that 'the moment we say that God is incarnated in this or that historical concrete instance the purity of God is defiled because He is now subject to the limitation of matter, time and space'. It is significant to note that unlike the other Christian theologians of dialogue the Rev. Minz does not contain him within the Christian theological circle. He maintains that Devanandan was right when he argued that Gandhiji's attitude towards Christianity began with a ready acceptance of Christianity, and

that later it went back to a frank criticism of the extravagance of the

Christian claim when he concluded that Hinduism was adequate and satisfactory for the Indian People.

Dr. Nirmal Minz observes a flaw in Gandhiji's thought. 'Gandhiji always spoke of Truth as God but he never spoke of the relation between Ahimsa and God in the same manner as he did with Truth or Satya and God.' Gandhiji attached more importance to 'Satya' which he equated with God than to 'Ahimsa'. It was because of the influence of the traditional Hindu philosophical and theological vision of reality.

The author is not blindly advocating the cause of 'Dialogue'. He is reasonable and logical in his arguments for 'Dialogue'. He adopts a pragmatic stance when he says that not only similarities or unities but also differences between religions must be taken into serious consideration. 'The differences at the core of religions are basic to their peculiar character and nature as specific religious communities.'

A commendable characteristic of this book is that the author does not hesitate to expose the false, illogical arguments like the extension of the principle of 'Swadeshi' to religion. The insight of the author into the depths of Gandhian thought is really remarkable. It should, however, be admitted that the author is not absolutely free from the leanings and prejudices the Christian writers—and in particular Protestant writers of this category—are often suffering from. For instance, at first the author blames the Churches and the Christian organisations for preserving views repugnant to the spirit of Hindu-Christian dialogue and accuses the participants of the dialogue of raising the wrong question on the right issue in their attempt to establish the uniqueness and finality of Jesus Christ, but later remarks, 'No doubt, the Christological issue is the key issue between the Hindu and the Christian'. Again, in the concluding chapter, Dr. Minz slips into the traditional Christian way of interpreting the revelation of God in Jesus.

In spite of all the limitations this exposition might have, this treatise will go into the annals of the history of inter-religious dialogue as an extremely valuable document that has evinced extraordinary penetrating insight into the intricacies involved in such issues.

Mavelikara.

MAMMEN VARKEY

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